



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health and Family Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Helene Nelson, Secretary

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FAMILIES ENCOURAGED TO OBSERVE ALCOHOL-FREE WEEKEND
Governor Doyle Proclaims April 2006 Wisconsin Alcohol Awareness Month

MADISON—Governor Jim Doyle has proclaimed April 2006 “Wisconsin Alcohol Awareness and Physician Alcohol Screening Month” to encourage all physicians and public health partners to incorporate alcohol screening into health examinations.

“Addiction to alcohol and other substances is a treatable disease,” said Joyce Allen, Director of Mental Health and Substance Abuse. “Treatment and recovery begin with information and screening provides that information. Once identified, alcohol and other drug related problems are as effectively treatable as hypertension, diabetes, and asthma.”

As part of Wisconsin Alcohol Awareness and Physician Alcohol Screening Month, the Department is also encouraging families to observe an alcohol-free weekend. Parents and other adults are asked to abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages for a 72-hour period to demonstrate to young people that alcohol isn’t necessary to have a good time.

It is estimated that more than 450,000 people in Wisconsin currently need treatment for a substance use disorder, including alcohol abuse. Many of these people may not seek help because of the stigma associated with abuse or dependency on alcohol or other substances.

“Physicians are in an excellent position to discuss alcohol use with their patients,” Allen added. “Screening for alcohol use and abuse in a doctor’s office can be the first step towards recovery from alcohol abuse and addiction. It’s also more likely that a person will respond if a physician intervenes and refers the person to treatment.”

Medical conditions associated with alcohol abuse include heart disease, cancer and liver disease.

If you suspect you have a substance abuse problem and would like help, call Wisconsin’s substance abuse helpline at (866) 211-3380. More information is also available at <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/substabuse>.

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